

## THE CHICKENS STAGE A PLAY

"CHATELAIN" REVERSED FOR A BARNYARD AUDIENCE.

Crinoline Costumes and an Anti-Scratching Edict. The Piffut Episode of the Faithful Duck and the Tragedy of the Lame Rooster—Real Villains.

They employed little Lizzie to make the costumes for them. She was very small, but not too young to be a clever needlewoman. She owned a nice workbox filled with thread and needles and tape measure and a whole paper of pins and she had begged pieces from her mother and her grandmother and her aunts and dressmaker until she was the possessor of a large bundle of scraps of silk, linen, cotton, velvet, ribbon and lace.

She was a clever child and seemed to understand the chicken figure very well, so that she seldom had any trouble fitting their garments.

Lizzie knew all about the fashions, too, for she had made an absorbing study of *Godey's Ladies' Book*, a number of old volumes of which she had found in her grandmother's bookcase. The result was that she admired crinoline more than she admired hobbie skirts. Besides, as she said the chickens when they first approached her with the request that she costume the play:

"You know, my dears, that hobbie skirts will be entirely out of the question for you. You really are not formed for them,



LIZZIE UNDERSTOOD THE CHICKEN FIGURE.

"And hens must never shriek 'Cut-out-cut-dawwut!' They must wait until I lay an egg every day and yet I have to go barefoot—barefoot—barefoot!" That is two things. Then this was said quite severely to the hens. You must try and remember that you can't scratch up the ground while you have on your human clothes. It doesn't look well in the first place and besides it's dreadfully hard on pantalettes and you'll get your claws tangled in your hoop-skirts and will tear the flounce of your gown. There, what did I tell you?"

The guilty hen who was caught in the act of scratching was so embarrassed that she hid her head under a burdock leaf while Lizzie disentangled her claw from a rent in her frock.

"Well, I can't help it," sulkily said the hen, her comb flushing a deep crimson. "I had to scratch. There was a fat angleworm going right down out of sight."

"My dear," said Lizzie, "I am surprised at you. That was an eel. Humans do not eat angleworms. Besides you must not be so greedy. It is enough merely to pass up your plate with the knife and fork left on, mind, and say politely, 'A little more of the grasshopper, please.'"

"But go on with the rehearsal. You were just beginning the second act I think." The red hen and the speckled hen snickered toward the centre of the stage, their heads close together. Says the red hen:

"They do say Melinda has deserted her nest, the nest she stole in the willow thicket. She deserted it when the first chicken hatched and left all the other eggs just on the point of hatching to chill and die. Do you suppose it's true?"

The red hen answered: "It doesn't seem possible, but she's such a flighty thing. Lo! There she comes now."

Enter a hen dressed in frills and furbelows, skipping giddily across the stage and clucking loudly to one weak little chicken who is struggling to follow her. "Come, darling! Come along with mamma and let's have a real good time together. I'm so glad the sitting season is over. I'm cramped and bored to death."

And she flounces and bustles about and finally plunges in with the other grown chickens to get her share of the corn, never heeding her poor child, who weeps bitterly.

The rooster's attention is attracted

and he apparently takes in the situation at a glance.

"Goodness gracious, Melinda," says he, "Do you mean to say you have deserted a nest full of eggs just on the point of hatching and come off with the first chicken?"

Melinda: Mercy! Do you think the roost would have hatched? I made sure they were all spoiled, and I was so tired of sitting.

The Rooster: Madam, a hen who has no more sense than that, even at her first sitting, does not know enough to attend to even one chicken. I shall remove this child from you and give it to yonder noble matron, who is already giving the most perfect care and education to fourteen just like it of her own.

Noble Matron (a fine, comfortable Brahmin hen): Come right in, dearie,



KEEP THE CHILDREN AWAY FROM THE PIGEONS.

and let me warn you up. Peck a little crumb of corn meal too. Lonesome Chick: Oh, dear! I want my own mother. I don't want to be the fifteenth chick.

Melinda (making a great show of maternal instinct): My child my child! They are robbing me of my only child! She finally consents to chicken away from the noble matron, but no sooner has she got him than she forgets his existence and goes rampaging over the rough ground, tossing her parasol, singing and jumping up to catch flies in the air.

The Chicken (cawing from a long distance in his little frightened shrill voice):—Mother, mother! Oh, wait for me!

The Rooster (coming up to Melinda with angry strides—Madam, enough of this. This is a busy world and you cannot be allowed to waste your time in such a manner. The chicken is too much and not enough for you.)

What the climax of this scene was we shall never know unless we go to the final performance of the play, for at this moment there was a great scurrying among the fowls.

The night prowlers had arrived. They were of course necessary characters in the play, but they had been rather suspiciously eager to take part, and the fowls were more than wary of them.

"Silence!" said Lizzie. "You know I'll make them behave."

The presence of Lizzie reassured the fowls to a certain degree, for that clever young person did not seem to be at all afraid of the night prowlers but fitted them with high-waisted costumes with calms and despatch. She even flipped the weasel on the nose with her thumb because he wouldn't stand still while she was bucking his belt. There were, besides the weasel, the fox and the possum and the owl and the rat and the



THE NIGHT PROWLERS.

snake, and they all had a wholesome respect for Lizzie, behaved themselves very properly and did their parts as villains with remarkable life and fire. Their acting was almost too vivid, and it is fortunate that they had their scene all to themselves, for no chicken, duck, goose, turkey or guinea fowl could ever have been persuaded to get within claws' reach of them. And who shall wonder when the weasel's proud boast was that he had "done for forty of 'em in a single night?"

After the night prowlers had finished their act and had departed lingeringly into the very back row of seats the pathetic scene of the faithful old duck was given. This always brought tears to the eyes of all.

The old duck is discovered lying by the side of the pond, where he has been mauled and left for dead by a vicious dog. His faithful spouse finds him, revives him, binds up his wounds, feeds him and, finally, when he has regained his strength



"OH, MOTHER, WAIT FOR ME!"

## A GUM PICKING VACATION

SPENT BY A COUPLE IN THE NORTH WOODS IN WINTER.

The Cold Not a Hardship and the Search for Spruce Gum Exciting—Expenses of the Trip Paid by the Sale of the Gum—Preparing the Gum for Market.

"Last winter we took a gum picking vacation in the North Woods that paid for itself," said a young married woman. "My husband's vacation came around in February, from the middle of the month to the middle of March. As a boy he had spent many summers in the North Woods, and last year he felt that he must go there in spite of the cold and the difficulty in getting about."

"We did not buy in our camp supplies until just before we struck the woods, and in that way we saved the express bill. We would have to pay had we bought in New York. We had, however, to get our clothing at the end of the line."

"Before heavyweight woolen underwear my husband and I were both provided with Mackinac jackets. He had a pair of woodsmen's knickers and I a pair made very much like them. Double weight leggings, moccasins and soft-caps made up our working costumes. Of course we wore our ordinary cold weather clothes until we reached camp."

"As much as I wanted to be with my husband during his vacation, I dreaded the experience of spending three weeks in the woods where everything would be covered with snow. This dread lasted until the morning after our arrival in camp. We reached camp late one afternoon, and although the woodsman to whom my husband had written had done much in the way of setting the place in order, there was much left for us."

"This work, in addition to our long journey, precluded a dreamless sleep, and it was not until the sun was well above the tree tops the next morning that we awoke. So eager was my husband to get into the open that as soon as breakfast was cleared away he packed our short toboggan with provisions and plunged into the forest. At least, it seemed a plunge to me."

"Instead of suffering from cold as I had expected I soon found that I was enjoying my walk. Never in my life had I found any amusement more exciting than hunting gum. First of course I had to learn to tell a spruce tree when I saw it. As there are three varieties it was not so simple as it seemed."

"As the white spruce yields the best gum, I began to look only for that variety. As luck would have it we struck a large patch of red spruce just after I had learned about the white. As a result of my being bent on that particular variety my husband had located half a dozen gum mines before I discovered that we were in the midst of gum bearing trees. As a consequence his bag was a quarter full of gum before I got a piece."

"That day we ate our first lunch in the open. We built a fire on the snow to heat the coffee we had prepared in camp that morning, toasting our bread over the fire on the sharp end of long sticks."

"That afternoon I made the greatest find of our entire trip. I found a tree on which there was nearly four pounds of first quality gum and almost as much second quality. This first quality gum is called blaster gum among the woodsmen. It is new gum, clear and translucent, though not pitchy."

"On the first tree I discovered it was in great lumps on the trunk, most of it so low that I removed it with a large pocket-knife. The seam gum was in a crack in the tree extending almost the entire length of the trunk. I took out all that was within reach of my knife and the rest had to be removed with a gum spud."

"In looking for gum I soon learned that most of the best quality is on the south side of the tree and on small trees rather than the old giants, which at first I made sure would contain the gum mines. Our next largest find was five lumps on two trees growing side by side. All of these lumps were overgrown by moss, and I should never have suspected the presence of gum had not my husband called my attention to the lumps and showed me how to remove the moss in such a way as to lose the least possible gum."

"These five lumps gave us seven pounds of clear gum, that is gum after the bits of bark and moss had been removed. This was all old gum, so it was classed as second grade."

"Because night comes so quickly we seldom started away from camp more than four hours on one hunt. At night after dinner and on rainy days we devoted ourselves to cleaning and sorting the gum. This is neither difficult nor tedious, for at least neither of us found it so as we worked seated before a fire in the wide chimney of our little camp. It seemed to be just the right ending for our days spent tramping through the forest in our snowshoes."

"When the selling time came we found that we had gathered on an average of three pounds and two-thirds a day. We sold the first grade for \$1.30 a pound, the second grade brought 75 cents a pound. Deducting our expenses from the time we left New York until our return we found that our surplus averaged 74 cents each day. Not a single profit, but a safe margin for covering expenses."

"Last year was a good gum year and we heard of many old gum gatherers who averaged a dollar a day for some time, thinking like a month. Two of these men stopped at our camp one night and assured us that they had been living in the open woods since they started out more than thirty days before. Their toboggan was loaded with gum which they said was their fourth shipment."

"Before going to the North Woods I had always believed that pure spruce gum to be the best of all for chewing. Now I take what the natives of Maine call patented gum, patented meaning adulterated."

"The truth about pure spruce chewing gum is that it is next to impossible to get. Before the gum is put on the market it is boiled or melted. All the impurities such as sticks and bits of bark are skimmed off. After this a quantity of paraffin and resin and a little sugar are added. This is the gum as it reaches the market. It is never pure gum."

"To chew the gum as it comes from the trees, the really pure gum, will tell you that the preparation is a great improvement."

Pigeons Hatch a Chicken.

From the Strand.

I have two faint pigeons, both male birds, and I noticed one day that they built a nest and then were sitting on it alternately, as if they were going to hatch eggs.

It struck me that it might be a good idea to put an egg of my hantams into the nest to compensate the pigeons for the trouble they had taken in building it. Apparently they appreciated my doing so, for about three weeks, when the nest for that time was empty, left to my great surprise I found a little chicken peeping from my pigeons' nest."

It was tempting to see how the pigeons tried to feed the chicken by opening their beaks, as pigeons do, and inviting the youngster to take a little from their crops. But I refused to do so, because it is a chicken and not a pigeon. The pigeons are very fond of the little one, and they take it to their wings to keep it warm whenever it was it, exactly as a hen treats her chickens."



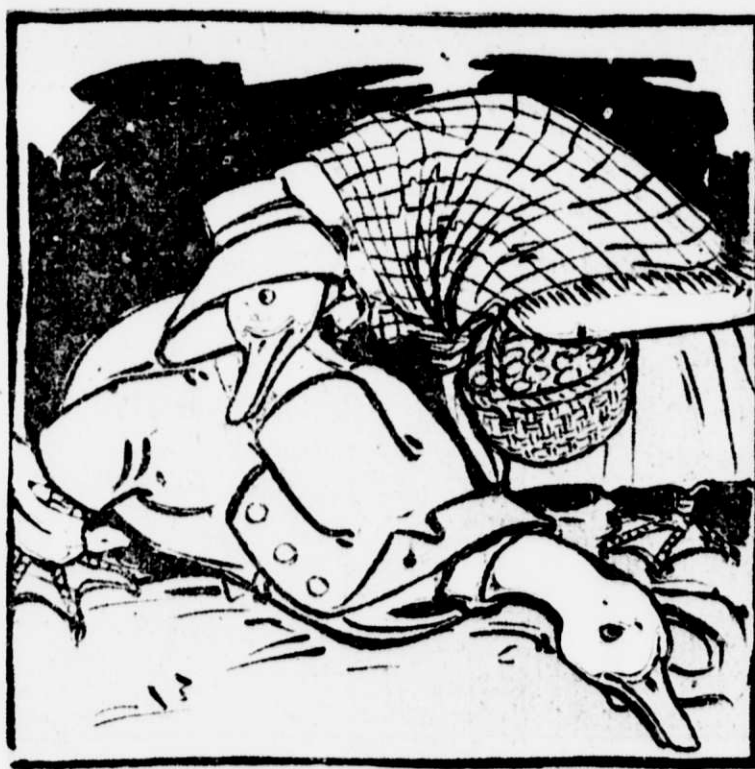
"YOU MUSTN'T SCRATCH WITH YOUR HOOP SKIRT ON."

but hoopskirts would suit you very nicely."

So Lizzie cut and snipped and basted and tried on and took in here and let out there and trimmed and finished up until all the fowls were provided with suitable costumes and rehearsals for the play began.

The play was based upon some of the most poignant problems of poultry life, but as the fashion then was the characters—and there were many of them, all fowls and their natural friends and enemies—were dressed in human costume and were supposed to conduct themselves as nearly as they possibly could in the manner of humans. Lizzie was politely begged to attend all the rehearsals and give the chickens her advice and criticism in the matters of human action and speech. This she obligingly consented to do.

"In the first place," said she, "all roosters when they stand on the top rail of the fence and stretch their necks out long and open their beaks wide must not say 'Cock-a-doodle-do!' because that is not nearly so human as to call first one. Women rule over he-e-re!" then another. And so they do he-e-re! And he-e-re! and here, and so on, the sound growing fainter and fainter in the distance."



THE FAITHFUL DUCK.

## ANY WOMAN CAN SEEM SLIM

EFFEKTIVE TWO-THIRDS DO TO CORRECT DRESS LINES.

Long Necklaces and Floating Pearls and Straight Lines in the Frock All Aid to Slenderness—Things Not to Do The Frenchwoman's Short Skirts.

Stand on Fifth avenue any pleasant afternoon, and you will see more slim women than you ever saw before in your life," said a portrait painter to a woman who complained that the styles were trying. "Go to any tea room at the hour when well dressed women are present, visit any smart hotel at the promenade time, look far and look near, and you will see that women were never so slender as they are now."

"Now this isn't wholly due to the fact that women have been trying to reduce. Of course, the beauty rules and regulations have had something to do with the propagation of universal slimmness for women, but it is safe to say that two-thirds of the slim effect is due to the styles of the day. Women have made themselves slimmer by diet and exercise, but the dressmakers and the dress artists have done the rest, have contributed the remaining two-thirds."

"It has come to that point in artistic development that a woman need not look stout unless she wants to. I can well remember the day when a portrait artist had to plan the costume of his sitter before he could put her upon canvas. Her clothes were as a rule far too ugly, far too unbecoming, to be used in a picture. Now this is wholly unnecessary. The woman who comes to have her picture painted wears clothes well adapted to her style of beauty."

"Now you are going to ask me how a woman can make herself look slimmer and you want me to give you specific rules for looking tall and slight. I can answer your question, but it must be with limitations."

"I would first say to a woman: 'Go and weigh yourself, note the table of weights and heights and see whether you are normal. A few pounds more or less will

not make any great difference. But if there is a great deviation, say if you are fifteen pounds over weight, then it is necessary to reduce."

"When I have a woman who is a little over weight I speak to her about her sleeves; I have her remove her cuffs. Nearly all fancy sleeves have cuffs of some kind, of lace or embroidery or some fancy thing, and I endeavor to make her see that these things make a woman look fatter. I tell her to use a tiny ring of fur or anything that Dame Fashion will permit, but nothing fluffy."

"Loosening the waist will generally make a woman look slimmer. Take a woman whose waist is drawn in like an hour glass and get her to let it out, tying a broad band of something around her waist, and she will immediately look slimmer."

"The long scarfs that are the style now are the delight of the artist. I can well remember when in my clothes press I kept a dozen of these scarfs for the use of my sitters. Now every woman who comes in here has a scarf of some kind; it may be only an automobile veil, but it is long and graceful in its lines. It may be a long scarf of fur. It does not matter to me as long as it is loose and flying so as to make a graceful picture."

"If you were to ask a Parisian how she makes herself look tall and slim she would stretch out her legs and tell me the following: 'A long chain or string of beads.'

"A wide, loose sash effect around the waist, but neither wide enough to be cumbersome nor loose enough to hide the figure."

"Something floating around the neck, neatly arranged to float in a certain fashion or hang in a certain way."

"An unbroken line something which exhibits the length from the waist to the floor; it may be only a panel or it may be a long girder, but there's always something."

"A wrist ornament, something that dangles and makes the arm look long and slim; it may be a bag with a long gold chain or it may be a reticule with silk strings, but there's sure to be that long, slim arm effect."

"Long, slim fingers, if the hands are

bare, and to make the fingers look long it is necessary that the manicuring be properly understood. The stubby nails of the business woman will never give the long slim fingered feet nor will the square nails of the domestic woman. The nails must grow long and be cut to rounding points if the fingers are going to be long and slim."

"Other things make a woman look tall, a train for instance; but it mustn't be too long; the little woman with a very long train is ridiculous; the tall woman with the long train is grotesque, but there is a medium which should be carefully studied."

"The French women have a new fad which may or may not catch on in London and New York. I was rather startled when first introduced to it."

"A French woman called on me in my Paris studio last summer to have her portrait painted. As she entered, followed by her maid, I was struck by something peculiar in her dress. The effect was indescribably chic, but it was startling just the same."

"I looked at her critically. She wore a black velvet gown, there was a handkerchief embroidered vest and the sleeves had certain ornate features that made the gown quite presentable as a picture gown. But there was one thing amiss."

"Your skirt," I ventured.

"What is the matter with it?" she asked.

"You want a full length portrait, do you not?" I inquired.

"Certainly," replied she, "and that is just the reason why I wore this skirt."

"For reply I invited her into the dressing room."

"Look," I said.

"She inspected herself from head to foot in the mirror and up and down again. 'I don't see anything amiss,' she told me."

"I hesitated as to whether I should tell her, then I resolved that it was the best way."

"Your skirt, madam," I suggested, "is not quite right. In fact it is a little too short in the middle of the front. It is, if I do not make a mistake, quite to your shapeliness, while the back is very long, even a train."

"The French lady was inclined to toss her head, but it ended in a smile and a willingness to instruct me."

"You do not know the latest fad," she exclaimed.

"The skirt is short in front to show the handsome satin and velvet boots and to display the graces of a pretty foot. But in the back it is long."

"But," I insisted, "would you be willing to have a family portrait painted in this style? Would you not be afraid that it would go out of style, leaving you looking bizarre?"

"For reply she leaned toward me. 'A pretty foot is never bizarre, a hand, some fine finger goes out of style, but I am painted in this gown I will always be a picture lady, for it is the most becoming dress I ever wore.'

"I asked her why she considered the gown becoming."

"I have two reasons for so regarding it," said she. "The first is the testimony of my friends; they tell me I look well on me. The second, and the more important, is the speech of my looking glass. My mirror says that I am three inches taller in a skirt of this kind than in the conventional skirt. With these friends advising me I cannot go far astray."

"I agreed with her and since that time I have painted two women short of stature, both showing the foot tops in front, or almost showing them, while the back was trained. It depends a little upon the skill of the artist, to be sure, but I have had very good results."

"No woman wants to look dumpy. I tell dumpy women to look to their colors; the little hat makes them look shorter; the flat hat is unbecoming; the big box hat is worse; it takes judgment to select a hat that shall rescue a woman from the accusation of looking shorter and fatter than she really is."

"I would make it a cardinal sin for all the women of all the world I would decree certain regulations, the violation of which would be punishable by eternal ugliness."

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## SAYS LIZARDS ARE LOVABLE.

The Lounger One Looks Into Their Eyes the More One Likes Them.

"Lizards bear a reputation well and one likes them the better the longer one looks into their beautiful, limber eyes. They are easily tamed and are soon learned to love them as their dart about on the hot rocks swift as dragons."

"The eye can hardly follow them," writes John Muir in the *Atlantic*, "but they never make long sustained runs, usually only about 10 or 12 feet, then a sudden stop, and as sudden a start again, going all their journeys by quick jerking impulses."

"These five steps I find are necessary as rests, for they are short winded and when pursued steadily are soon out of breath, pant pitifully and are easily caught. Their bodies are more than half tail, but these tails are well managed, never heavily dragged nor curved up as if hard to carry; on the contrary, they seem to follow the body lightly of their own volition."

"Some are colored like the sky, bright as bluebirds, others gray like the belated rocks on which they hunt and bask. Even the horned lizards are more than half tail, but these tails are well managed, never heavily dragged nor curved up as if hard to carry; on the contrary, they seem to follow the body lightly of their own volition."

"One specimen fourteen inches long which I observed closely made no use whatever of its tender sprouting limbs, but glided with the soft, easy ease and grace of a snake. Here comes a little gray, dusty fellow who seems to know and trust me, running about my feet, and looking up cunningly into my face. He is watching, makes a quick pounce on him, for the fun of the thing, I suppose, but he has shot away from his paws like an arrow, and is safe in the recesses of a clump of chambray."

"Gentle saurians, dragons, descendants of an ancient and mighty race. Heaven bless you all and make your virtues known, for few of us know as yet that scales may cover fellow creatures as gentle and lovable as do feathers or hair or cloth."

The Finish.

From the Catholic Standard and Times.

"Isn't your new gown finished yet?" "Oh, gracious, no! The dressmaker's work on it was only completed last Saturday."

"But if the dressmaker's through, isn't that all?" "All my friends have to criticize it yet."